

tobacco's effects on minority populations and the best means to reduce tobacco use in the future; and 3. Transition assistance for small, community-based events and activities which can no longer be sponsored by the tobacco industry.

Without these provisions, guaranteeing reductions in youth smoking among all sectors of the American population will be impossible. Moreover, many of the bills introduced in Congress mandate a substantial increase in tobacco prices that will result in a regressive tax increase on low-income minorities if national tobacco legislation does not include efforts to reduce tobacco use among both minority youth and adult smokers.

The Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act will ensure that new cessation, prevention, research, or education programs, administered by federal agencies or state health departments (which will be funded through federal block grants), are supported in the minority community based on the minority group's percentage of the smoking population. In addition to funding these initiatives at an adequate level, the legislation assures this historic opportunity to prevent tobacco from further harming the minority community is not squandered. By providing the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Minority Health with a role in coordinating the minority tobacco activities of the Public Health Service and approving state applications for block grant funds, a sufficient degree of accountability and organization will be established to produce genuine results.

The minority caucuses' legislation also makes \$1 billion of the funds made available by national tobacco legislation for conducting badly needed biomedical, child health, and tobacco-related research at minority education institutions across the nation. Finally, the Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act funds treatment of tobacco-related diseases at community health centers and provides transition assistance to small, community-based events, activities and publications sponsored by the tobacco industry in the past but may no longer receive advertising dollars as a result of bans included in national tobacco legislation.

Despite last week's defeat of tobacco legislation introduced by Senator JOHN MCCAIN, it is imperative that Congress continue to work toward enacting comprehensive national tobacco legislation that President Clinton will be willing to sign. The bill introduced by members of the minority caucuses today offers substantial policy initiatives that any genuinely comprehensive national tobacco legislation must include.

Minority populations have suffered from disproportionately higher rates of tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases as a direct result of the tobacco industry's targeting. The Surgeon General's report released last month entitled "Tobacco Use Among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups" found that Native Americans and African Americans have the highest smoking rates of any ethnic group. Hispanic youth have smoking rates which have almost overtaken those of white youth, and many Asian American/Pacific Islander sub-populations display frighteningly high rates of tobacco use. Minority populations also consistently display the highest rates of tobacco-related diseases, particularly lung cancer.

According to a report recently released by the Centers for Disease Control, these trends of tobacco use in the minority community are

likely to worsen. The report found that smoking rates among African American and Hispanic high school students increased by 80 percent and 34 percent, respectively, from 1991 through 1997.

While the legislation introduced today by the members of the minority caucuses is a stand-alone bill, its provisions are designed to be included in more comprehensive national tobacco legislation.

The Members of Congress who support the Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act look forward to working with the Republican and Democratic leadership as well as President Clinton to enact national tobacco legislation this year that will take positive steps toward fighting tobacco use in every American household.

The Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act is the culmination of almost a year of historic cooperation between the minority caucuses. I am proud of the final product, and would like to thank the dozens if not hundreds of people who have participated in its development. In particular, I would like to thank the following congressional staffers who have spent countless hours working on this bill: Adam Gluck, Alysia Davis, Angela Vincent, Ann Jacobs, Bobby Vassar, Brenda Pillors, Charles Dujon, Charles Stephenson, Claudia Pharis, Curt Clinton, Danny Cromer, Darlene Taylor, David Sutphen, David Wildes, Deborah Spielberg, Edward Jackson, Esther Aguilera, Emilie Milne, Fred Turner, Fredette West, Howard Moon, James Williams, Jennifer Leach, Jessica Diaz, John Schelble, Jon Alexander, Joyce Brayboy, Heather Hale, Kate Emanuel, Keith Stern, Ken Keck, Kenya Reid, Kerry McKenney, Kim Alton, Kim Richan, Kimberly McAfee, Kimberly Teehee, Kirra Jarratt, LaTario Powell, Larry Dillard, Leah Allen, Liz Powell, Lucy Hand, Marcus Mason, Marie McGlone, Marsha McCraven, Minnie Langham, Oneki Dafe, Paul Cunningham, Richard Boykin, Ronnie Simmons, Rory Verrett, Samara Ryder, Sean Peterson, Sheila Harvey, Sherry Newton, Susan Rosenblum, Tammy Boyd, Tambi McCollum, Terri Schroeder, Todd Gee, Tom McDaniels, Tony Vance, Ufo Eric-Atuanya, Walter Vinson, and Yelberton Watkins.

I would also like to thank Peter Goodloe from the House Legislative Counsel's office for his assistance in drafting our seemingly endless modifications. Without his expertise, this legislation would never have been prepared in time for introduction today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 1998

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, on June 24, I inadvertently voted "no" on roll call 261. It was my intention to vote "yes".

INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAMS

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 1998

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, one of the nation's experts on education, D.L. Cuddy has written an important article I would like to bring to my colleagues' attention.

THE NEW TRANSATLANTIC AGENDA

(By D.L. Cuddy)

In the U.S. Congress, Rep. Henry Hyde has been warning people about school-to-work (STW) education initiatives, and Senator John Ashcroft has amended the Workforce Investment Partnership Act now being discussed to prohibit its funding of STW. At the state level, N.C. Rep. Don Davis is chairing a House Select Committee for Federal Education Grants, which has been investigating STW grants among others, and invited Richmond Times-Dispatch op-ed editor Robert Holland to address the Select Committee on this subject.

While the implications of STW at the state and national levels have been widely debated, not much has been written about the international connections. On May 18, the White House released a statement at the conclusion of the U.S.-European Summit in London, indicating that "through the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA), created in 1995, the United States and the European Union have focused on addressing the challenges and opportunities of global integration."

One part of this "global integration" in 1995 was the agreement between the U.S. and the European Community establishing a co-operation program in higher education and vocational education and training. The agreement, signed December 21 of that year, called for "improving the quality of human resource development . . . Transatlantic student mobility, . . . and thus portability of academic credits." In this regard, a Joint Committee would reach decisions by consensus.

As part of the NTA, the U.S. and European Union then convened a major conference, "Bridging the Atlantic: People-to-People Links," on May 5-6, 1997 calling for "thematic networks for curriculum development," and further stating that in an information-based global economy, "governments too are obliged to adapt their economic, training and social welfare programs." The conference final report noted that in the U.S., ACHIEVE has been one of the organizations at the forefront of defining key issues in this regard and developing strategies to address them. ACHIEVE has been measuring and reporting each state's annual progress in establishing Internationally competitive standards, and business leaders involved have indicated their commitment to consider the quality of each state's standards when making business location or expansion decisions.

The "Partners in a Global Economy Working Group" of the conference discussed "what redesigning of curricula is required . . . (i.e. what career skills are needed), . . . portability of skill certificates, . . . and institutionalizing cross-national learning/training activities."

Most people debating STW in the U.S. are familiar with the role of Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy. He's also on the National Skill Standards Board (NSSB), and on its website under international links, one finds "Smartcards Project Forum," under which